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## **Excerpts of opening remarks by Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ) in the House of Representatives during debate on FAA offshore wind amendment—July 19, 2023**

Mr. Speaker, my amendment—cosponsored by Jeff Van Drew and Dr. Andy Harris—requires the President or his designee to certify that offshore wind turbine projects in the North Atlantic and Mid-Atlantic Planning Areas “will not weaken, degrade, interfere with, or nullify the capability of radar relied upon by the Federal Aviation Administration or the Armed Forces.”

It would also require the DOT IG to conduct a comprehensive review of the sufficiency of the process used to approve offshore wind projects in areas critical to air travel and national security.

Many of us are deeply concerned over the safety, efficacy and likely deleterious environmental impact of embedding some 3,400 ocean wind turbines—each the size of the Chrysler Building in New York City—off our coast.

We have serious, well-founded concerns that offshore wind turbines will interfere with radar capabilities and as a consequence, create a dangerous and potentially catastrophic impact on both military and commercial aviation activities.

Offshore wind development in the Mid-Atlantic and North Atlantic Planning Area will affect some of the busiest air space in the country—including the areas surrounding Newark, New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington DC—which contain major international airports, dozens of smaller airports, and several military and coast guard aviation facilities.

Mr. Speaker, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management’s (BOEM) radar interference analysis from August of 2020 stated, “The research team found that the proposed and hypothetical wind farms are within the line of sight of 36 radar systems, indicating that they will generate interference to these radars under normal atmospheric conditions” and “future offshore wind energy installations on the Atlantic coast may impact land-based radar systems.”

Additionally, the 2017 Interagency *Ground-Based Coastal Air Surveillance Wind Turbine-Radar Interference Vulnerability Study* said that: “Offshore wind turbines may pose unique impacts to coastal radar systems given the differences in propagation of radar signals over the

ocean versus land, as well as the larger size of offshore wind turbines compared to land-based wind turbines.”

This particular analysis concerning potential “unique impacts to coastal radar” relied on data from the Block Island Wind Farm off the coast of Rhode Island, whose turbines are 589 feet tall. The turbines slated for installation off the New Jersey and New York Coast are significantly higher—nearly 1000 feet tall!

The [Department of Defense has expressed serious concerns over offshore wind development off the Virginia Coast](#) and it is important to determine exactly what those concerns are and whether the potential harms off the Virginia Coast in anyway apply to the North Atlantic and Mid Atlantic Planning Areas.

Mr. Speaker, I have personally read some of the environmental impact studies for these projects, and they confidently—almost arrogantly—assert that problems that might arise can all be “mitigated.”

Really? Then support my amendment and ensure that is the case.

But a 2022 comprehensive study on offshore wind development by the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine found, “wind turbine generator mitigation techniques have not been substantially investigated, implemented, matured, or deployed.”

Additionally, the NAS study found that, “wind turbine generator returns obfuscate the Marine Vessel Radar picture for both magnetron based and solid-state radar thereby affecting navigation decision making.”

Mr. Speaker, allies including [Taiwan](#), [Japan](#), [Finland](#), and [Sweden](#) have all halted certain offshore wind turbine projects due to objections from their Armed Forces and concerns over radar and freedom of safe movement for aircraft. Taiwan, as we all know, faces a military threat from Xi Jinping’s China, and has concluded that they may not be able to detect an assault due to radar interference from offshore wind turbines.

According to a [Taiwan News](#) article last year, “The military has confirmed that wind turbines could interfere with the surface-to-air missile systems deployed in the northwestern coast of Taiwan. The low-frequency noise generated by the turbines is likely to affect the reflected radio waves that phased array radars need to detect signals of missiles or aircraft, per [UDN](#).”

No matter where any of my colleagues stand on offshore wind, a certification by the President or his designee—and the due diligence that will require— that offshore wind turbine projects in the North Atlantic and Mid-Atlantic Planning Areas “will not weaken, degrade, interfere with, or nullify the capability of radar relied upon by the Federal Aviation Administration or the Armed Forces” is clearly both prudent and necessary.